

REVISITING THE BLACK MALE IDENTITY IN TAIYE SELASI'S GHANA MUST GO

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ABSTRACT

The social and psychological issues behind the actions of Black males are catalyst for the negative projection of Black male characters in literature specifically. Taiye Selasi's *Ghana Must Go* is the deconstruction of stereotypical Black masculine identity. She has reconstructed the Black male identity as a positive one. *Ghana Must Go* parallels the stereotypical images of Black males with presentation of strong, progressive and positive Black male characters. This qualitative cum descriptive research analyzes the Black male characters of *Ghana Must Go* from the theoretical perspective of Gender Studies with multi-dimensional Post-colonial studies. *Ghana Must Go* takes the social, cultural and psychological experiences of its characters in past and present to project the analysis on domestic and professional fronts from the perspective of an emergence of new Black male identity. The paper concludes that Selasi provides through *Ghana Must Go*, an alternative discourse to the stereotypes of African American Black males by showing them reclaiming their African background in the competitive globalized world.

KEYWORDS: Afro-American Literature, Black Male Identity, Post-Colonial Studies, Reconstruction, Stereotype

INTRODUCTION

Literature plays important role in the construction of an ideology and national stream. With the construction of imperial discourse, Europeans created the missionaries and civilized movements to get superiority and power over the colonized. By constructing the binary of self and other they developed an image of negative, bastille, uncivilized, inferior, irresponsible and unable to think and rule Blacks in contrast with the positive of the Whites. Said (1978) called the European discourse as the Orientalist discourse, which plays important role in the presentation of colonized African as savage for the construction of White supremacy. Literary texts were constructed as the colonial discourse. Colonial discourse imaginatively constructed and presented the peoples of colonized places without knowing them and without experiencing their culture and lands. It critically presented the racial discrimination to dominate over social, political and national ideologies of the colonized other. Orientalist's texts served the European ideologies of dominance and power. Bhabha (1994) rejects the binary of fixed and original identity rather he proposes to see the identity as the process of negotiating new contents-social, economic, political, literal, cultural and lingual. The theory of Gender Studies shows that Gender Identity is conscious and fragile, in comparison with African Black males.

According to Ashcroft, Gareth and Helen (2003) Negro was thought to be incapable of contributing in intellectual and civilization process of any country. They were dehumanized despite of their developing ideas; enlightened thinkers and distinctive works in many fields. Popular and influential written narratives were also proposed by the enslaved Africans, which are now presented as British and American. Ashcroft et al (ibid.), further quoted W.E. Du Bois who declared that black people should have the right of aesthetic pleasure of art. And their folk art must be presented as their identity of

being human in the world. He admires the Black art and literature. Previously the Black African literature was not recognized as the part of literature. Their folk arts and verbal literature were not considered as literature. Later they got the anthology of their own literature and arts. They founded African poetics for the recognition of their own literature.

In order to unveil the cruelty of European ideologies many anti-colonial texts, movements and theories are generated. Africa is always a special place to discover. European discourses presented Africa and Africans as black, negro, and barbarous. Famous colonial discourses include *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, presented Africans as worse than animal as wild and ill-mannered. In order to deconstruct the negative image re-presentation is needed to bring the reality of African lives, culture, language and ideologies. In the construction of African discourse, Fanon advised the intellectuals from Africa whether living within or outside the African territories, to bring forth the African discourse with the real life projection of Africans.

For the representation and deconstruction, European forms are adopted and adapted. New literary strategies are developed in literary studies specially. Real life images are recovered and celebrated. Political, social, economic and cultural ideologies need to revive according to the changing situations of the time for the benefit of the lay man. Especially in the case of Africa and Africans colonial discourse needs to be deconstructed in order to present the positivity of the very place and people. With the true presentation of Africa we can see that African culture, land, tradition, language and whole environment create beauty in the world. Post-colonial theory gives space and environment to all the anti-colonial and anti-imperial re-presentations. Fanon (2008), speaks for the positive projection of Africans and dignity of past.

Selasi has taken the positivity from the life struggle of diaspora Africans and presented this thought in her essay *Bye Bye Barbar*. This positivity is further explained through real life images and experiences as shown in *Ghana Must Go*. She has redefined the Black male identity which is formed through social, economic and ideological upheavals. The themes of family, separation and the legacy of fateful decisions are handled in a compelling way that promises a wide readership for Selasi's novel. It is surely this admirable ambition and the promise of future work that saw Selasi included on *Granta*'s prestigious 'Best Young Novelists' list in 2013.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to Cilicia Senta Augustine (2002) gender studies is the field of interdisciplinary study and academic field devoted to gender identity and gendered representation as central categories of analysis. This field includes women's studies, men's studies and LGBT studies. The term 'gender' is used to refer to the social construction of masculinities and femininities. The paper's focus is upon Men's studies i.e.; the social and cultural construction of Black Masculine identity specifically. Black male identity has been looked down upon as irresponsible failures in the stereotypical discourses.

The paper locates a counter discourse against this stereotypical presentation of Black male identity in Taiye Selasi's debut novel *Ghana Must Go*. Bhabha (1994) stated that identity is the way of individual 'self' and a fact of being who and what a person is in the society. As described by Fanon (1965), 'this has been mainly done with the representation' in literature. From the historical background it is analyzed that the people who have the issue of identity are repressed and marginalized by either colonization or ongoing imperialism.

Redefinition of masculine identity is needed as described by Augustine (2002). It is the product of social structures and there have been great upheavals in the social, economic and ideological experiences of men. Black male identity is mainly disturbed because of political scenarios of colonization and imperial rule. Said (1978) stated that Oriental

societies are stereotyped as traditional and under developed such as the natives of Africa, Arab and India. Political and cultural critics like Fanon and Said drawn attention to redefine and represent the distorted images of the Orient with its real purity. Stereotypes and negative identities are in conflict with experience, histories and culture. Euro-centrism has projected the Negroes as savages whose identities are 'othered' by the European enlightened 'self'. Fanon(1965) argued that the *native intelligentsia* must re-construct the society, values and history according to the difference of experience.

In African literature we find, usually the celebration of motherhood. Even from the literary works of famous Black writers we always have Female as a strong character. Fatherhood has been neglected and Black males are always stereotyped as irresponsible, drunk and harsh. This amounts to the classic example of double othering of the Black males by not the orientalist texts but also by Black writers like Morrison and Alice Walker. This othered image of Black male is countered by Selasi through her presentation of a new younger generation of Black males like Olu and Kehinde and the previous generation like Kweku. Patricia Waugh (2006) viewed that the racial discrimination produces unsuccessful fathers, husbands and sons. This research counters the negative stereotypes of Black men by presenting the reasons behind their failure and installs a positive projection of responsible men towards society and family. It shows that Black male identity evolves through emotional and socio political experiences. Men are usually considered as unemotional, aggressive and oppressive. The research argues that it is only because of their position in the society which does not allow any deviances from strict Masculine model of responsibility and strength.

Ghana Must Go has rightly presented the Afro-American male identity as a responsible citizen. In order to prove the hypothesis, Male characters of the novel that are; Kweku, Olu and Kehinde are selected. Story has taken accounts from historical, social, cultural and political influences which construct and deconstruct the Black male identity. This research projects the Black males as the progressive ones, dreamers of better life, maker of homes who want a peaceful happy family and at the same time they are best in their professional field. In order to get progress they are in favor of hybridity and have an ambivalent attitude. They mimic for betterment and they are the nationals of dual geographies which scores positive elements in their personal identity. Shame, home and exile are the basic problems to deal within the critical discourse of the novel.

ANALYSIS

TaiyeSelasi's debut novel *Ghana Must Go* is the re-presentation of African American identity. She has constructed the diaspora identity which is the composition of hybrid culture and language. With the presentation of different incidents of different characters, she has given different aspects of Black male's life. The story is mainly about the Africans who are living and born outside the African territories. Selasi has constructed the counter discourse against the negative projections of the Africans by projecting positive figures. She dismantles the binary of developed and progressive Whites vs under developed Blacks who are considered as unable to think and progress. She has destructed the stereotyped image of Black males specifically.

Kweku Sai was a genius and progressive star surgeon in American hospital. His career is demolished by the outrageous racial injustice. Heartbroken Kweku abandoned his family and after many years returned to Ghana, his native home and lived there till his death. His wife FolaSadie Savage gave up her dream to study law after meeting and falling in love with Kweku. She preferred to give birth to their son and raise all of their children. After abandoned by Kweku she tried hard to give better life and future to all of her children and for this sake she sent all the children away from her on

their different ways to live, study and flourish.

Every member of this international African family is exceptional and talented. The eldest son Olu became surgeon to reconstruct his fathers' dreamed life. The twins, Taiwo and Kehinde are sometimes shown telepathic. Taiwo is seductively beautiful daughter who remains at the top of the class. Kehinde is a brilliant artist whose paintings are internationally sold at auctions and exhibitions. Sadie the youngest and loved one of the family is a natural dancer and mothers' favorite. She is jealously in love with her best friend. All of them are sent to different paths of the world, where they get the complex experience of their lives, until the tragedy of their fathers' death brings them together at their parent's native home town Accra, Africa.

The Impact of Colonization on Black Males

Previously literature of Africa used to lament on past, about the colonial oppression. Later the trend changed towards the exploration of different issues particularly identity, culture, language, authority and many more. Many intellectuals like Fanon advised to rehabilitate the present situations from the mistakes of the past; reclaiming past with the modern forms and techniques in order to cope-up with the present. From the twentieth century this trend changed towards the ethnic, communal and national identity and culture. Colonization is the major factor that affected the history and present of Third world countries. Africa and the Africans are the most affected by the colonial situation. Africans suffered from slavery, racial oppression and ethnic injustice. Individual identity distortions with the racial discriminations damaged the Africans not only physically but emotionally and psychologically too.

We can clearly see the impacts of colonization in the life of African diaspora. *Ghana Must Go* presented the colonial era of Africans as a catalyst of making many individuals' identity as a whole. Kweku Sai's personality is produced out of the past experiences of colonization. He suffered from colonization and slavery in his childhood. His childhood is showcased when he goes back to his native home Ghana at the death of his mother. Kwekus' father was an artist who built his home and suddenly disappeared when Kweku was very young. He heard from the villagers, "he left". Europeans were in power at that time his father was victimized by the European injustice. He jailed for punching drunken English who was harassing his wife. Immediately after that he abandoned his family and never returned.

Kweku spent his childhood without fathers' kindness and love because of colonial oppression. Colonization affected on social, political, economic and ideological levels of different countries in different shapes but the most affect can be seen upon the lives of the colonized people who were victimized from different tactics. Kwekus' father was taken away by European supremacy. In the rage of power, Europeans destructed many homes, families, relations and individuals. Fanon (1965) from the psychological studies concluded that, the emotional upheavals with the physical abuse disturb the colonized subjects. Selasi in *Ghana Must Go* states that from the shores of Ghana many stories of colonial exploitation can be found. Colonialism and ongoing imperialism not only destruct the social, political, economic environments of the country and nation but also the domestic environments of African Blacks. White supremacy stole many African fathers, husbands and sons.

History shows that males and females of African world suffered equally but with different conditions and situations. Female suffering was double in a sense that at first they were marginalized by the social norms used to practice in the African culture and secondly from the colonizers physical abuse. African social norms made males as the authoritative figures. During the colonial era African males were deported to the other lands in order to serve as the slaves,

this was the main reason when African male abandoned the home and family females became inexperienced leaders of their home and family. Sufferings of African poor women started when abandoned by the males of the family who are the household members of the family. To raise children in miserable conditions without any support of males, to dream about better future for family, to fulfill all the cultural and religious practices in the vague hope for good fortune, was the only thing that African mothers use to do at the time of colonization.

Kwekus' inspiration was whites' authority. He wanted big houses like the one situated on Ghanian beach as an allegorical figure of European rule, while the whole village was surrounded by the old poor huts. He wanted to defeat poverty, illiteracy and minimal means of living in Accra. His dream was of successful life and happy family with all the modern means of living which can fill their lives with adventure that he could not find and enjoy in his childhood. During all his childhood he walked barefoot on the Ghanian lands for woods and water for the livelihood of his family. He was the victim of poverty. African economy was disturbed and ruled by colonizers. The lands were occupied. Colonized people of Africa couldn't get freedom of living by no means.

Ghana Must Go presented Kweku Sai and Folasade Savage as the pre modern diaspora immigrants. They migrated from Ghana and Nigeria respectively, on scholarship under the European missionaries, to America. All the brilliant people were captured by the charming dream of better future across the border in spite of Africa. Selasi in *Bye Bye Barbar* writes: "Highly skilled Africans left the continent for the West". Scholarship opportunities were given in the territories of Britain, Canada, and America. All of them became progressive genius in every field of life. As Kweku from the novel became "An exceptional surgeon". (p. 7). Even the president of the Boston Hospital admires the abilities of Kweku, "they wanted the best surgeon. The president found Kweku". (p. 74).

Kweku became a mimicked man in his thoughts and actions. Colonization secretly changed his mind and way of thinking and his whole ideology of life. All he wants is either this way or that way to be like a White man with authority having all means to enjoy the life. He wanted a house like that of a white man, he acquired European knowledge to fight for what he wanted. He was a victim of colonization the most rather than that of the poverty, though his sensibility and loyalty reside in his native roots. That's why he argued his mother to go for higher education and promised to come back as a progressive one. All he wanted to change the condition of his and his family's life. He positively uses his ambition and qualities. But life is a hardship to win.

Sensibility of Black Males towards Family

The patriarchal culture of society presents the masculine model as the strongest figure of family who must sacrifice his attachments and needs in order to maintain his masculine status. This phenomenon has been in practice for many decades which made the men to control their sentiments and learn that attachments are weakness and dependency. Selasi has through her characters shown Black males the way to express their sentiments freely.

Selasi through *Ghana Must Go* shows the sensitivity of African males towards their family and relations. They are not crudes and bastille. They have their own sensibility. Kweku migrated to America on having scholarship from missionaries. The motto was: "If the son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed". (p. 60). Kweku's family was enslaved by the colonizers like that of other Africans. He presented himself to serve the Europeans in order to free his family. This motto trapped Kweku with the thoughts of bright and better future for himself and for his family. The most

tragic incident which affected his life and mentality was his sister's death which gave him the aim of becoming a doctor. Being a surgeon he wanted to help many other patients like his sister who suffered by poor medical facilities. He left for the sake of his love for his family. But her mother knew that he would never return if once left. At first she was abandoned by her husband and then by her son.

Kweku wanted to become a doctor and this dream came from his experience of childhood too. Being a sensitive man who remained in the family with strong emotional bond he takes this decision. His youngest sister Ekua died of 'treatable TB, because of insufficient basic means of living. He always remembered Ekua's cheerfulness: "that brand of indomitable cheerfulness" [can] "only" [be] "seen in the children living in poverty". There is always a smile on their hallow faces with wide sunken bright eyes. He always wants to make comfort for his family and to lessen his sisters' pain but he could only touch her face and whisper a cruel lie, "You are not going to die". But he couldn't defeat the fate and misery. All the dirt- poor children of Africa laugh at the death and at the disregard of the world on their miserable fate. Ekua died laughing at death. Death of Kweku's sister gave him a knot in his heart, which he couldn't remove. The dusts of time only make it invisible but did not replace or remove. It remained there to be felt at some other time.

Impact of Racism on Black Males

While living in another estate being an 'outsider' African diasporahs to face many problems. The salary Kweku used to earn was minimal. Kweku and Fola were having a narrow apartment. Though the dream was of better future and freedom but later it is thwarted by the ethnic oppression. Being a highly qualified surgeon Kweku was serving the American society but couldn't get the equal rights and equal wages like those of the natives. Kweku and Fola's fights are deeply rooted in their poverty: "When they fought they foughtabout the diapers or the dishes or the dinner parties with colleagues". (p. 73). They were facing racial oppression in the territories they dreamed for. The issue of ethnicity, national and communal identity became the hurdle in their dreamed life.

Kweku and his family lived hand to mouth because of low wages given to the marginalized groups in America. Globalization affects the economy of the settlers the most. They are marginalized because of their ethnicity; Kweku suffers because he was an African black migrant in the American white society. American domination on the globalized world sustains till time. This led Selasi to write for the African males who are neglected at every level.

Selasi speaks for the positive image of Black males specially. Black males who suffered and tortured the most are the ones showcased as bad men. They are missjudged by their actions which are in fact the result and reactions of physical, psychological and emotional oppression. Western discourses always presented Blacks as cold and harsh ones. But they are the sensitive and feelingly creatures who are strongly bonded with the relations and land. Black male characters of *Ghana Must Go* are strongly and sensitively bonded with family, relations and land along with their brilliant and genius brains and career. They suffered because of being 'Black' in the hostile world which sees things in binary systems of good/evil, white/black, positive/negative and many more. Selasi by propagating the *Afropolitan* spirit speaks for the Black males and clears their position through reasoning their actions. She justified their actions by rational reasons from their real life experiences.

Men are traditionally identified and respected by their profession and work. Society, culture and people value the hardworking men and so does the family. In such a scenario unemployment is the painful situation for a man for his self-esteem. Earning wages gives men high status and powerful identity in family and society. Kweku faced the racial

injustice. He was fired from the hospital. He became the victim of racial injustice through world has progressed in many ways but the issues of racial, ethnic, communal and national identity still occur in different forms. He was victimized by associations' arrogance. "It was a wrongful dismissal". (p. 69). Racial discrimination, ignoring his abilities, played its prejudiced role because he was a Black and an immigrant.

At first Kweku was ordered to operate a dying person who was already in the miserable condition. It shows association's arrogance in both ways: first Kweku is forced for surgery and then is thrown out unjustly without sensible reason. "It was wrongful dismissal ..." (p.69). A trustee of association was important rather than a perfect professional. Kweku is a "general surgeon without equal" (p.73). The only thing they could say for the judgment was, "though a phenomenal surgeon, you failed ..." (p.72). Because the racist president saw him as Black only and couldn't resist against the White authority. "That's all the white people were good for was letting him go" (p.72).

This racial injustice destructed the life of this family. Kweku ashamed of his defeat couldn't face Fola who sacrificed for his success and his children whom he wants to give a bright future and best life. He was forcibly removed from the hospital from his job and from his compassionate profession. "The Intelligent Parent Falls Dumb" (p. 85) because of injustice, European power, white supremacy and money minded people. To lose a job, for Kweku was a loss of his dignified identity and his self-esteem. Being a moral Black man he could not face his family as a failure. It was a life time shame for him to be dismissed without any justified accusation after a hard work of so many years. Resultantly Kweku left his family.

Sensitivity of Black Males

Fifteen minutes before the death of Kweku he came to the moment of realization: whatever he has done to his family and especially with Fola was his entire fault. He lost her he lost his love of life. At first he lost his mother and then his wife. Both the women were the most important part of his heart. He abandoned both. He left Fola to weep and to face the harshness of world all by herself. The only regret of his life remained in the question, "Why did I ever leave you?" (p.89). Ocean of time zone takes away all the beauty of life. Many questions remained unasked and unanswered. A long and sharp silence cut the all emotional bonds of family relations. The acceptance of death gave him "remembrance ... (regret, remorse, resentment, reassessment)". (p.21).

At this Selasi in the text argue that the stories of "faceless, nameless" people like Kweku and Fola are always missed. Country, poverty and war swallowed up these stories while these simple people have more to share about their "petty triumphs and defeats of the Self (profession, family) versus those of the State (grinding work, civil war)". (p.91). Selasi represented Africans from the admiration of Asian immigrant family's statement: "Asian child can win a spelling bee may be, but a science fair? No. it's the Africans now". (p.118). African immigrants are of great talent and ability.

From the European discourses people have imagined African men as irresponsible who do not respect and care for women and family. The question is asked from Lings' father to Olu, "How can you value another mans' daughter, or son, when you don't even value your own?" But people never see in the reality of the lives. There is always a reason behind every action that happens. From the historical backgrounds we can see that Africans suffered the most from colonization. There is the history of colonization behind the every African character either direct or indirect.

On questioning Olu about his father (Kweku), who left Fola to raise her children alone, Dr. Wei tried to make Olu ashamed of the bitter truth but Olu strongly condemn the question and says, "I'm just like my father. I'm proud to be like him". (p.120). this is *Afropolitan* pride in their parents and indigenous roots. They feel no shame in belonging to Africa or a broken family.

Kehinde being an artist is a sensitive person who does not speak much. He preferred to remain silent except with Taiwo. Taiwo, his telepathic and spiritual twin, is also close to him only. He rejects to become a doctor like his father and elder brother Olu. For this sometimes he used to think that his father Kweku doesn't love him because he breaks the tradition of Sai family by becoming an artist. Despite of his distinctive nature of not sharing and quietness he is also emotionally bonded with his family and with its every member. He is exceptional in the family. Her mother used to resemble him with *abeji* the spiritual god from the African myth. Kehinde was "born second but the wiser". He was only less social otherwise he wasn't less than anyone in the family. He remained with Taiwo like a shadow. Both were too much similar with one another. Each depicts the other's self. Kehinde was something above from the worldly description. He was kind of spiritual, an artist, and the sensitive one. He never shows his sensitivity to anyone. Taiwo knows him because he was her shadow self. He was a protector though he had to do the biggest sin of his life but that was the only way he could do to protect his sister from other men, in the result of which he lost his sister's faith and his belief in God. Later they regain their relationship being brother and sister at the death of their father.

Black Man as a Compassionate Father

A Father who takes the responsibilities requires very conscious requirements. Traditionally they are physically absent and emotionally distant from the family for maintaining strict discipline. Nurturing is usually the role of mothers only but Selasi proved Black male as a father the most compassionate figures who promised to care for his children the most and the one who doesn't feel it hard and stressful. The character of Kweku is re-presented as the 'Father'. Olu his eldest son always admires him as a talented doctor. He believes in his father's abilities. On the pre-mature birth of his youngest daughter Sadie he spent restless nights and days, trying to save that life of his beloved daughter who became Folas' favorite. Sadie was a tiny infant. There was no hope of her life. She was dying. Kweku "felt it, felt this dying, in the center of his chest, tingling, thick, biting, and sharp". (p. 17). Being a father he felt responsibility to do something for his child's survival. He looked like a mad man on researching treatments, consulting colleagues, "trying to win against the odds". (p. 18).

Kwekus' sensibility being a dutiful caring and kind father is shown. He feels for his children but never shows up his own tension and suffering. At the birth of his youngest daughter, though doctors were hopeless of her survival but Kweku researched for the survival options not because of a doctor but because of a parent, a father. The way the little infant was breathing he felt it within his own heart, with the every beat of his daughter his heart pounds up and with every critical second of infants' life Kweku himself became restless. He spent all days and nights outside the incubator of her beloved seeing from the love of father and noticing the condition from the doctors' eye, as he was an intelligent professional. When he embraced the sensitive but a fighter infant who struggled to survive, he felt certain kind of pleasure and victory as a triumphed father of a warrior who defeat death.

Describing about the Asians and Africans, Said (1978) states that they are warm and soft because of their nature and this is why they are considered as easy to defeat. Africans have the culture and tradition of a united family, who feel for their every relation. They have familial bonds for whom they love, care and feel. While for Americans there is no

family system in their culture. Every individual has his own life; they do not live for others. Africans get degenerated on loosing family and relations.

Kweku, "literally crossed burning sands barefoot, (in fact, had gone shoeless for most of his youth)". (p. 44). It's the poverty and colonization which made him suffer the most. This is why he was a devoted person being a professional, husband and father. He was always a sensitive man towards his family. He used to hide his feet from his children because it was a shame for him and his daughter Taiwo used to think that her father loved his feet more rather than his children. It was a shame that he suffered from poverty and colonization. He never wanted his children to feel pity on their fathers' critical situation. All he wanted is every comfort for his family. Kweku used to love Taiwo the most. She was his favorite. Despite of his low income and an apartment of two rooms he always wanted to give Taiwo her own room and a bed to make her comfortable. Whenever he came home, tired, Taiwo's smile and her snoring made him delightful.

Being a kind and responsible father he always wanted the best for his children. He saved Sadie with untearable struggle. He wants to give Taiwo her special place. He wants Olu to be a progressive surgeon and to Kehinde he wants the best of all, although he never expressed all his feelings. Selasi represents all things. The omniscient author has all the knowledge of characters, thoughts feelings and experiences and paints every side of a character inwardly and outwardly. Being a father he never tells his children about his colonized past, this is why he used to hide wounded feet but his children used to think that their father loves his feet more than all of them. He was a simple production of slavery and racial oppression who left his indigenous home and family for better life to compete with others and to win the equality in the eyes of world. He faced a horrible past that's why he wanted to give his children a better story to tell. Fola and his children were precious treasure to him. *Ghana Must Go* has rightly presented the warmth and softness of the emotional bonds which mean a lot in African tradition and culture.

Black Male: a Progressive Professional

Stereotyped presentation of Black male as irresponsible not wise, who fail in every field of life is countered with Kweku's image as "an Intelligent Parent, a Well-Respected doctor, Best in his field". (p. 15). Through Kweku's professional success, Selasi has shown that Africans are talented, and skillful. European stereotypical imagery was wrong. Being a diaspora writer living beyond the indigenous roots and having an entire different attitude in living, Selasi has represented the diaspora identity and culture in her debut novel *Ghana Must Go*.

From the historical accounts and newspapers it is evident that African males are shown negatively as rapists who are harsh, violent, aggressive and unfaithful to their families and every other relation. They were portrayed as failures in their practical life unworthy of taking any official duties. Only stories from such perspectives had been presented, but nobody ever gave any logical reason behind such kind of evidences. Although they are true but not every number of such issues is true. Most of them were created by stereotypical imaginary and by the forces of oppression.

"I haven't met single lazy African student,... African immigrants are the future of the academy". (p. 118). *Ghana Must Go* represents the Male identity with its positive boom. Kweku Sai is represented as a son, husband and father with his sensitive personality as a progressive and successful doctor. Black male representations in *Ghana Must Go* are passionate in every role. They tried to play all their roles with loyalty, purity kindness, love warmth, sensitivity and sensibility. Being a son Kweku loved his mother from the bottom of his heart but never said that. His family is most

important to him in the whole world. He served his native family at Ghana by walking bare feet for sixteen years. This entire struggle gave him the holes and wounds which cannot be healed throughout his life. He went for higher education in order to serve his mother and sister a better life.

Kweku being a professional surgeon served with devotion and hard work. He became doctor on the basis of his intellect. He was in the eyes of Whites from the time of his childhood. He got scholarship which shows that Black male has the potential of intellect and intelligence. He progressed in the white society; he made his own distinctive place in the eyes of his white president, who at first admires his qualities. Later Kweku was oppressed with racial injustice and was dismissed from the job. It shows the silence of Black male over White oppression. He tried all the legal ways because he was intellectual and logical. He didn't lose his temper. There is no incident when we can see an aggressive and abusive side of Kweku in *Ghana Must Go*. White supremacy is the reason of destruction of his family and personality. He couldn't face his children with such shame.

Further being the Diasporas of the American society Selasi represented Olu as a sensible and logical man in his professional life and emotional life. He is also a successful doctor. Kehinde is an exceptional artist of an utmost talent. All the Black males are represented with their positive energies towards life. They are intelligently progressive. There are no traits we can find like they were presented in history.

Black Male Being a Loving Husband

Men should not only be defined upon social and economic heights rather they must be encouraged and accepted on emotional terms as well which are neglected usually. Resentments and sentiments of Black male as a loving and caring husband add up the positive blend in his personality. *Ghana Must Go* represented Kweku Sai as a loving husband who loved Fola till his death. Although life's harsh realities separated them but he couldn't stop to love Fola at every moment of his life. She was always with him either physically or in his mind and heart with the warmth of love. Racial injustice of the American society was the reason of their distances. Poverty of migratory Black laborer robs the love and affection from their lives.

Any law itself cannot change the strongly rooted cultures and norms of society. It needs resistance, redefining, re-positioning and re-presentation which can effectively transform the society step by step. Definitions must be broadened and accepted in the terms of Black males. It can only be done by educating and providing strong support in the favor of Black male identity. Analysis shows the importance of male figure as the role models in family and society. Absence of fathers and husbands led the family towards destruction. The pressure of social cultural norms, the fear and inability to communicate their love make the men frustrated

CONCLUSIONS

The paper has presented a historical and contemporary experience of social oppression in American culture and the formation of white male patriarchal system serving as a catalyst to the complex identity formation of Black male identity. Slavery is meant to be a prominent condition for Blacks; a condition that lay the historical framework for racism which resulted in a conflicted formation of identity within the Black males. In a careful analysis of Black male identity formation through the lens of Post-colonial studies, the research shows that they (Black men) are conscious of the abusive and oppressive nature of the society in which they live. They often reflect a duality of consciousness in understanding that their experience in America, historically has not met their basic needs of love, nurture, belongingness and acceptance.

From the Post-colonial perspective the novel has created a counter discourse against the already constructed knowledge about Black males.

The crisis of Black male identity is due to the negative dominant discourses which create stereotyped Black male characters. The roles of Black males need renegotiation and flexible views regarding their 'self' identity. It demands the acceptance of Black males sensibility and sensitivity towards family and self. Social construction of cultural norms has exaggerated the binary of male and female which do not allow men to actively participate in defining their positive self. It needs a positive shift in patriarchal system for men specially.

Research shows that Selasi has countered the black stereotyped characters, which are always shown as lazy failures, uncivilized savages and with other negative connotations. *Ghana Must Go* gives fame to the progressive blacks who are working hard in their lives and maintain their way in the stream of harsh and competitive environment of globalized and civilizing world. They are doctors, lawyers, bankers, engineers, politicians, musicians, artists and many more. The 21st century has given pace to redefining African identity, being a progressive genius.

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